

Sultry singing on a Sunday

THERE is a confluence of events this Sunday that spells good luck for the jazz fan, the emergence of an intriguing new venue for jazz in Bath and the debut of a singer of real quality.

The venue is Moles, which is putting on jazz on Sunday nights. Moles has an extended Sunday license, drinks served until midnight, and has laid out tables and candlelights for a nightclub atmosphere. It also has a better sound system than almost any jazz club.

The singer is **Katya Gorrie** and, though she's new to the area, she has loads of experience, impressive credentials and a great CD.

I first heard of Katya when Mike Sage, proprietor of Music Matters, on Broad Street in Bath, called me up to tell me about her CD, called Pousse Café. Mike's not in the habit of calling me and, frankly, he's not impressed by most jazz singers, but here he was.

Katya Gorrie is the real thing, a singer who can put across a song with a potent combination of sultriness, delicacy and accuracy that really hits the mark.

It doesn't hurt that she has a fine band on the CD co-led by her excellent guitarist and partner, **Denny Ilett**.

Mike reckons a similarity to Patricia Barber, but I went to the source to find out where Katya Gorrie comes from, musically and geographically.

"In 2002 I moved to the UK from Vancouver, Canada, where I had been going round and round in a circuit of restaurants and pubs, keeping my head just below water," she begins with a chuckle. "I just felt, I've got to get myself over to Europe. I had an idea that the festivals and the clubs here made for an attitude that was, well, a bit more interested in what I do. Canada isn't really a jazz country. There are great players and venues in Vancouver, and then in Toronto and Montreal, but there's a hell of a lot of space in between.

"I joined a great six-week tour through Western Europe with a swing band and it confirmed what I had felt. People loved this music, they were genuinely interested. On that tour I met the man who is now my partner, the

When sultry jazz singer Katya Gorrie got the seal of approval from Mike Sage of Bath's Music Matters, Charley Dunlap had to check her out for himself

all that's
Jazz

guitarist on my CD, Denny Ilett. That was it; that was the key. I went back to Canada, said goodbye to my friends and family, packed up my life and here I am. Because I was born in Liverpool, immigration was no trouble.

"I've been singing for, let's see, 20 years? I studied jazz at Capilano College in Vancouver. It's outstanding, quite well known, sort of the Berklee Music School of Canada.

"Denny and I lived in Oxford for the first year, but our tenancy ran out and we decided to move to London or to Bristol. So we moved to Corsham. London looked a bit grim, Bristol was looking better, but I found this gorgeous cottage in Corsham on the internet. We justified moving there because we were going to make an album and could work on it there without distraction. It turned out to be a very good idea. We spent the winter listening to a lot of songs and really thinking about the album.

"It is a unique selection of songs. I gave a lot of thought to creating an emotional and thematic thread, going through cycles of love from flirtation and infatuation to feeling blue, then resignation, then rediscovery. That led me to doing songs that people don't ordinarily do, which is great.



HITS THE MARK: Katya Gorrie has a voice to match her looks

"Since I moved to England, I think my singing has been highly influenced by Julie London. I didn't know that much about her before, but I feel now like she is a kindred spirit. I like her because she really sings a song, like the other people I like: Sinatra, Mel Torme, Blossom Dearie ... and Doris Day.

"For the gig at Moles we've got the Bristol boys, or a few of them anyway: **Dave Goodier** will be playing bass - he is so good, I'm thrilled to be playing with him - and **Andy Tween** on drums. **John Baggot** (Portishead keyboardist) has been playing with us and said he was coming down, but I don't know if he's bringing his keyboard or not. I think there are a few other musicians coming round too, just to check us out and say hello."

You can check her out, too, at Moles this Sunday at 9pm.



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